[English]

SHRI SAT MAHAJAN : Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Welfare to a very serious situation which is slowly developing in the tribal areas of Himachal Pradesh. In the Reorganisation Act, 1996, old Himachal Pradesh people Gaddies and Gujjars were given the status of tribals, while the people who went from Punjab were denied of this status. Since then they had been struggling to get the same status. The State Government has taken up the matter again and again and ultimately the Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha, without any party consideration, unanimously passed a Resolution that these people should be given the same status.

Similarly, the Jonsar and Bawar tribes of trans-Giri areas - Shillai, Chopal and Dadra Quar — want that the same facilities as that of the tribes of the Uttar Pradesh may be given to them. The Constitution has provided that they are unequal people. They cannot face the competition with the well developed people — the people who developed forest economy, animals and literacy. They cannot compete with the Gaddies and Gujjars. On 31st March, 1994 the Vidhan Sabha passed a Unanimous Resolution. Mr. Ramoowalia, the Minister of Welfare, in reply to the Chief Minister's letter, promptly assured that this grievance will the redressed. Nothing has happened so far.

Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government and, especially of the Minister of Welfare who was quick to react to the Chief Minister's communication, to the situation development there, otherwise it will be too late and a situation like the North-Eastern State will develop there. There will be a big law and order problem in Himachal Pradesh and the Centre will not be able to control it.

[Translation]

SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI (Simla) : I support Shri Mahajan on the issue raised by him regarding declaration of certain communities as tribals. The Himachal Pradesh Vidhan Sabha has also passed a Resolution to this effect. The Gujjars of Punjab, who migrated to Himachal Pradesh, are akin to the Gujjars of H.P. Trans Giri, Shillai and Chopal fall in my constituency. And Dadra Kuear adjoining U.P. border has not been declared adivasi area, whereas the adjoining hill area which falls in U.P. has been declared as adivasi area...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : What is your demand?

SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI : I want that the aforesaid area should be declared tribal area.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have received a large number of petitions and representations from various states and various committees where they either wanted inclusion or exclusion from certain categories. Regarding the specific point raised by Shri sat Mahajan, I would like to tell the House through you that the hon. Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh met me twice and he wrote a letter to me.

About the problem of Gaddis and Gujjars, in half the Himachal, they enjoy tribal status and in the other areas of the same state they do not enjoy that status. The matter is under my consideration. I will let the House know very soon about it.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH (Vidisha) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to relate the tale of woe in the House of the poor and hapless scheduled caste people of Madhya Pradesh. A large number of scheduled caste people have made forests as their habitat and they have been in possession of the land holdings for the past 50 years. They used to cultivate their laud for a living. Although they have been in possession of their land holdings for as many as 50 years yet the lease hold nights have not been transferred in their names. This year, the officials of the forest department destroyed their crops, burnt down their huts and beat them mercilessly. This is not an isolated incident but a common in feature Madhya Pradesh. On top of it their women foth were molested about which I alone lodged 13 F.I.R.s in Vidisha and Raisen districts but no action has been taken to-date.

They are being treated very callously. Through you Sir, I request the Central Government to intervene in the matter and direct the state Government to give baseholc rights to all these scheduled Caste people who had been in possession of their land holdings prior to 1980 and also so long as the forest land consolidation work is not taken up, the scheduled caste people should not be disposed of their land holdings and all those forest department officials should be prosecuted who committed atrocities against them...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Only one hon'ble Member can speak at a time.

[English]

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Pudukkottai) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as we had fought for social justice earlier, I had to fight for this chance to raise a genuine and important issue. This issue may seem to be concerned with the people of one State, but since the prestige of this House lies in this issue, I would like to draw your kind attention to it.

It would be right for me to mention that the first Amendment of the Constitution was made for reservation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes owing to the efforts of our late social reformer Thanthai Periyar, and our mentor Anna. Having realised the long felt need of the weaker sections, that is, the supressed, oppressed and the depressed people, the Tamil Nadu